

Geography and Economic Development 155*Pastoral Nomadism*

Figures for 1943 show 11,720,000 sheep and goats in Sinkiang, 233
1,550,000 cattle, 870,000 horses, and 90,000 camels.¹ Most of these 131
are in Jungaria, and most are pastured in steppe land by nomad
Kazakhs and Mongols. Smaller numbers are owned in the alpine
pastures of the Kirghiz, and others by settled people on the
fringes of cultivated land. Sheep, followed by beef cattle and
draft cattle, are the most important market animals, and wool
and hides are of course also sold. The Chinese provincial au- [65]
thorities like to demand horses from nomads in payment of taxes,
which limits the number for sale. Camels are bred both for use
by the nomads themselves in their migrations and for sale to
Chinese trading caravans.

There are great variations in the techniques of herding ani- 233
mals. Cattle, horses, and camels each prosper best on a different
kind of pasture. The best feeding grounds for one kind may lie
quite distant from the best range for the other kinds. There are
even considerable differences between animals as similar to each
other as the yak and the cow, or the sheep and the goat. In the [436]
steppe pastures, sheep tend everywhere to prevail as the basic
form of property; so much so that the sheep is the unit of ex-
change value, in terms of which the prices of other kinds of prop-
erty are quoted. The basic reason for this is that in the steppe
environment the grasses which can be eaten by sheep are more
numerous and more widely distributed than the preferred feed
of any other kind of animal.²

By skillful herdsman'ship, the different kinds of animals can be
maintained in combination. Much depends on the selection of
pasture, on deciding how long to remain on a pasture, when to
move, and how long to make the marches. Nomads do not break

¹ Chang Chih-yi, unpublished field notes.

² A count taken in the steppe area of Tannu-Tuva, where conditions are
in general similar to a great part of Jungaria, showed 600 plant varieties, of
which cows eat 56, horses 82, but sheep as many as 570.

- 233 camp and move just for the sake of happy vagabondage. If the drives are too long or have to be made over unfavorable intervening country, the animals lose condition or go lame; and lame cattle cannot graze well. Therefore every shift of camp is an equation which has to be worked out in such a way that the benefit of the fresh pasture is greater than the damage done by moving. Moreover there are often times when it is preferable or even compulsory to graze some kinds of stock at a distance from others.

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241 Pastoral nomadism always has a fringe of farming, which may be either rainfall farming or irrigated farming. In past history, at times when the power of the nomads was ascendant, these margins were cultivated for the benefit of the nomads by subject, tributary, or hired people drawn from settled communities. Recently, when the authority of a settled state has been paramount in Sinkiang, as in similar periods in the past, two processes developed. On the one hand, poorer nomads took to agriculture. Some of them became permanent farmers, breaking away from their ties with the nomadic community and no longer submitting to its authority. Others spend part of the year growing hay and grain for richer members of their clan or tribe. On the other hand, the authority of the settled state deliberately pushes colonization by cultivators out into nomad territory, sometimes for strategic reasons and sometimes merely for profit.

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241 When the Manchus overthrew the Jungar Mongols late in the eighteenth century, they used farming colonists to displace nomads. Colonization continued under the Chinese Republic and is still continuing. It is economically profitable to the Chinese authorities to expropriate land from nomads and sell it to colonists, and it has been considered politically profitable when it results in quarrels between Uighur colonists and Kazakh and Mongol nomads. Chinese refugee colonists have also been brought in from Honan, in central North China; to make room for some of these, machine guns mounted on trucks were used to exterminate Kazakh camps. (Personal information from American observer.)

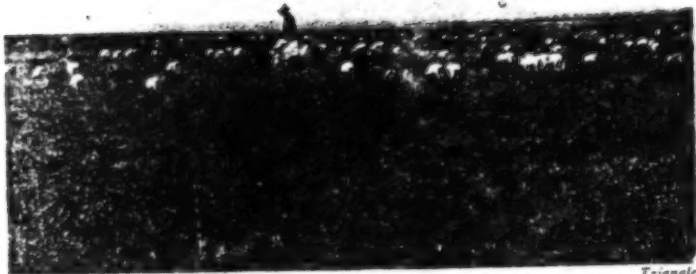
560 There is also some voluntary development of agriculture by

[244] of night soil to the farms as fertilizer, and the farms which are
361 nearest to the bazaar and therefore receive the most night soil
241 form a zone of intensive garden cultivation producing vegetables
and fruits for sale to the nonfarming population. In Kucha, a
fairly large oasis, fertilizer is generously applied within a radius
of five miles from the district city. Within this zone there is one
orchard of seventy-five acres which produces apricots as a cash
crop for the market. Beyond this inner zone, the amount of ferti-
lizer applied decreases rapidly, and two other zones may be dis-
tinguished. In the near one rice, corn, wheat, and cotton may be
grown and wheat and corn, when manured, may be grown in
rotation. In the third zone practically no fertilizer is used and
here hardier crops such as millet, kaoliang (sorghum millet), and
potatoes are planted, and fallowing must be practiced. When
some fields must lie fallow, the small farm is at a great disad-
vantage in competition with the large farm. In this zone the cost
of transport to market rises rapidly, and the price of land falls.

[435] Beyond this third zone there is usually no water and the desert
begins abruptly. Sometimes on the fringe of an oasis, however,
361 there is a thin zone of grazing. Sheep are pastured here, and at
● 233 the edges of roads, and in land within the oasis too rough for
372 irrigation. Sheep are also pastured in a few places in the scrubby
land where drying rivers reach the desert. The shepherds are the
Dulani, a people of uncertain but probably nomad origin who
live a gypsy-like life and keep apart from the settled Uighurs of
the Tarim oases. Both Uighurs and Dulanis breed a sheep which
is better for mutton than for wool.

433 Most food is consumed in the oasis where it is grown, though
262 some oases have a surplus for sale while others are not self-suffi-
146 cient. The diet of an Uighur villager is largely cereals. The con-
sumption of sugar, fats, and meat is meager except among the
wealthy, and there is practically no milk in the diet. The daily
calory intake of an adult villager, as estimated in Khargalik in
1943, was 1215 calories of wheat flour, 1215 of corn flour, and
150 of mutton.

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Triangle

Sheep numberless as the stars. The shepherd, riding back and forth among his flocks spread out over a half mile, finds moving them from one pasture land to the next a slow process.

[p. 32 (A)]

The snow has come and the nomads must seek other grounds for their flocks.



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Lattimore



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The nomad spends the night in his temporary shelter which he sets up each evening.

[p. 32 (G)]

AMONG THE MOUNTAINS OF HEAVEN 227

000 Sunset in September 12,000 feet up—must have been freezing hard. Of course the oil froze and clogged your bolt. Wonder the rifle went off at all."

563 We were surprised to find a family of "Sarts" or ordinary
233 Turkis sharing this small valley with the Kirghiz. Coming down from the ibex-ground one day I overtook them trekking down from their summer grazings, a pretty sight. On the opposite side of the stream a lean-visaged Sart shepherdded a couple of hundred sheep and goats up an almost perpendicular cliff and along narrow ledges literally overhanging the torrent; this was necessary because the current was too strong for short-legged muttons to cross. Behind, a quaint procession came filing down the track and splashed across the stream; half a dozen mares with their foals, a man and two boys perched on masses of bedding on top of ponies, a neat smiling Sart woman with her baby and another man leading a camel piled high with the framework and felts of the family mansion.

484 Descending to the plains once more, we camped two glorious days on wide meadows near the long yellow loess bluffs of the Taushkan River. A hundred and fifty miles of the snowy Mountains of Heaven sparkled in the sky to west and north and north-east of us. It was advisable to give the baggage ponies (we had hired new ones at Uch Turfan) and our own animals a day or two in clover before the next lap of our journey; for we were to march 164 miles across the southern face of the Central Tien Shan and down the lower Muzart Valley to Bai on the Kucha road.

000 We were sorry to leave the Uch Turfan neighbourhood and the lovely valley of the "Hare River." We found the people delightful and quite unspoilt, especially the women. The latter, poor dears, seemed to be even more at a discount than at Kashgar; not one in five appeared to have a husband to herself, and they complained bitterly to D. of their hard lot. They came in streams to our camp among the meadows to "salaam" D. and beg medicines for blind, crippled, tuberculous and otherwise incurable relations. And not one of them came empty-handed. All tried to pay D. for her medicine or advice in peaches, eggs, melons, cream, corn-cobs or some such agricultural product. And when she not only made them take back most of their "widow's mites" but distributed (as she always did wherever we went) little presents of buttons, imitation jewellery, safety-pins, pieces of muslin, beads and

± [The Yangi Art Jilgna -- An + Lyst]

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIETY

^S_N 1. General Introduction

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The Northwest of China, consisting of the four provinces: Shensi, Kansu, Chinghai, and Sinkiang, part of which is now called the Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region, comprises an area of 1.3 million square miles, (almost a third of all China), in which thirty-six million people live. There are at least four different racial types (Turanides, Sinides, Mongoloides and Tangutides) and more than a dozen different ethnic groups: Eastern Turks or New Uighur (Chin. Wei-wu-erh), Chinese (chin. Han), Chinese Muslims (chin. Han-hui or Tung-kan-hui, Engl. Dungans), Kazakhs (chin. Ha-sa-k'o), Kirghiz (chin. Chi-erh-chi-ssu) Uzbeks (chin. Wu-tzu-pieh-k'o), Tatars (chin. T'a-t'a-erh), Tajiks (chin. T'a-chi-k'o), Western Mongols or Oirats (chin. Ölöt or simply Meng-ku), Sarigh-Uighurs (chin. Tung-hsiang-hui-hui), Shera Yögur (chin. Tu-jen), Monguors (chin. also Tu-jen), Salars (chin. Sa-la), Tibetans (chin. Hsi-fan), Manchu (chin. Man), Sibo (chin. Hsi-po) and Solons (chin. So-lun). The last three ethnic groups, the Manchus, Sibos, and Solons are persistently listed in Communist censuses, although it has been proved that they are non-existent as linguistic units, or as separate ethnic groups. Numerically, the Chinese constitute the overwhelming majority in the Northwest (about thirty million).

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While the Turks of the Northwest (i.e. New Uighurs, Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, Tatars and Salars) are rather firm believers in Islam (Mohammedanism), the Western Mongols, Sarigh-Uighurs (the latter are Turks), Shera Yögur, and Tibetans are faithful Buddhists of the northern form, also called Lama Buddhism, and the Chinese believe in a variety of religious or philosophical systems: Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and even Demonism and Animism.

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The economic pattern of the Northwest as well displays an enormous variety; we find nomadic pastoralism among the Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Western Mongols, and Tibetans, intensive horticulture among the New Uighur of the oasis-belt of Sinkiang, agriculture by means of irrigation (kariz system. See chapter about agriculture) among Chinese (only fifteen percent of the Northwest agriculture is without any irrigation), sedentary Turks and Mongols, and a mixture of primitive agriculture and pastoralism among some Tibetan and Mongolian Tribes of Chinghai and Kansu. The Turkic and the Chinese Muslims are the bearers of the trade along the old "silk roads" of Sinkiang, Chinghai and Kansu. The urban centers of the Northwest are also centers of petty industry and handicraft. The newest

1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China AF13
Sinkiang A11 •
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175 towards Russia, Turkey, and England. The cultural cohesion
631 created by Islam that connects Chinese Turkestan with Russian
668 Turkestan and other neighboring Muslim countries, and that
178 created by Buddhism that connects Mongolia with Tibet
619 through Chinghai and small areas of Sinkiang, marked the
648 four provinces of Sinkiang, Chinghai, Kansu, and to a small
degree, Shensi, as one single area which represents one
administrative unit.

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563 The Eastern Turks:

241 The main pattern of social life of the Eastern Turks is
based primarily on "Oasis Agriculture" with its irrigational
complex. All agriculture in this area is made possible through
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563 the organized use of water. The family organization among the
596 Eastern Turks is therefore an extended one, since a certain
level of productivity can only be reached through collective
labor (upkeep of irrigational systems and dikes). One reason
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[312] the Eastern Turks developed the extended family pattern
[241] is that the family receives water in proportion to the amount
of labor its members put into the upkeep of irrigational
systems and canals; the greater the family, the more water
is therefore provided for their land.

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[622] The Internal structure of the family system is not based
[634] upon clan rules. Eastern Turkic communities are governed
by a body of leaders, selected from the community itself
whereas the larger governmental districts are headed by
Chinese officials or, at present, by Chinese Communists.
563 A secondary aspect of Eastern Turkic social life is formed
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[441] by trade and handicrafts. Merchants and craftsmen form
"guilds" which in turn influence the social life of the commun-
ity.

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563 Kirghiz and Kazakhs:

614 Kirghiz and Kazakh society is clan-based. (The definition
of the notion of "clan" is explained in the chapter about the
Social Structure.) All family relationships are deeply rooted
in the clan system. The main pattern of social life among
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563 these two tribes is created by their nomadic way of life, whose
233 most essential economic activity is cattle breeding. The trans-
361 migration to a semi-sedentary life is now under way. The Commun-
[177] ists insist that the Kirghiz and Kazakhs occupy a permanent
[668] winter camp site, since this facilitates better political
control over the tribes. The choice of the summer camp site
still remains more or less in the hands of the tribes. Kirghiz
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[622] and Kazakhs are ruled by "baks," or "manaps" (elders)
responsible to the Chinese officials.

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563 The Mongols: general remarks.

233 Mongol social life is based on nomadic pastoralism. The
[594] basic unit is the nuclear family. A group of patrilineally

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N A group of patrilineally
563 related families forms the basic economic (i. e., migrational)
621 unit in Mongol society. Pastures are distributed among such
S units. The structure of the society itself dictates a certain
622 collectivistic working concept. Mongol social groupings are
563 led by tribal chieftains, who are directly responsible to the
127 district Chinese official. Mongol society, unlike other North-
668 western societies, has not undergone great changes under
Communist influences. Their basic pattern of life has remained
the same as it was under the Manchu and Republican regimes.

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563 The Oirats (or Western Mongols):

233 The Oirats of the Northwest are primarily pastoral nomads.
434 Their chief source of income is cattle, horses, sheep and
131 goats. Because they live in a desert-steppe area they move
around in larger or smaller groups depending upon the avail-
able resources.

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563 The designation for these small economic and migrational
621 units or camps is "xotn" which includes a group of nuclear
594 families patrilineally related - tracing descent from a common
613 ancestor in the third, fourth, or fifth generation.

597 Membership in this group can be gained by adoption, by
attachment of a daughter's husband in the case of a man
with no sons and of poor unrelated families or poor related
families on the paternal side. Although some poorer families
remained apart from these "xotn" it usually is more worth-
while to add their few cattle, etc., to that of the larger
group and render services in return for the benefits gained
thereby.

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613 Among the Oirats the closer an individual's relationship
554 to the ancestor, the greater prestige and status he enjoys in
this group.

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563 The headman or elder ("axalaci") dwells in a tent situated in
361 the front of the encampment facing south. The remainder of
622 the group is arranged according to the age of the male members
5 in a circle behind the dwelling of the elder. The dependent
613 families are situated in the rear of the circle but still according
554 to the closeness of their relation to the ancestor.

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563 Wives of members of these extended families are also
621 affected by the social set-up; their position and status varies
593 directly with that of their husbands, although a wife's position
562 as far as respect patterns go was never equal to her husband's.
A wife observes strict respect for her husband's kinsmen who
possess, by reason of age and relationship, a higher position
than that of her husband. Very often she will not even pronounce
the names of any of these elder gentlemen out of respect for
them. The status of the wife grows with that of her husband
during his lifetime. When he dies, she can either remain
living with his kinsmen, in which case she holds the same
position socially that he had during his lifetime, or she can

/Oirata/

return to her father's family, in which case she forfeits all rights which were hers as a member of her husband's family.

The oldest male of the oldest family holds the position of "axalaci" which carries with it the right of final authority in the group. Upon the death of the "axalaci" authority over the "xotn" is invested in his wife who in turn passes the care of the herds on to her oldest son or a younger brother of her husband.

Herds are the common property of the "xotn" but are managed by the "axalaci." However, the cattle belonging to dependent related or non-related families are managed by the owners and is not the common property of the "xotn."

If any of the sons of the "axalaci" desires to move away from the family and establish himself independently, he can rightfully claim a percentage of the common herd. If the particular times happen to be especially prosperous so that cattle are in such abundance that pasturage in one area is lacking to supply them all, the son might be encouraged to leave, the pressure for his departure increasing if there were ample manpower to get along without him.

When the "axalaci" dies the herds are distributed evenly among his children, with the exception of the eldest son, who receives a larger percentage than his younger brothers. A certain percentage also passes into the ownership of the clergy.

The "xotn" or encampment is a political as well as an economic unit. It is termed a "fifteen" (does this mean that each "xotn" was broken into units of fifteen yurts, or is it simply a convenient term synonymous with "xotn"? The reference is vague on this point.)

If a crime is committed by a member of a particular "fifteen" against an individual or group outside of his own "fifteen" the entire unit will be penalized for this infraction of the law. Thus, a strong element of social control was made operative.

The "xotn" is also a very convenient unit for purposes of taxation, and as a resource of cattle and other animals it was the income for the nobility and the lamaseries. In addition the encampment is an exogamic unit.

The use of pasturage among the various "xotan" is based primarily on tradition. Each has several hundred acres of land from which they choose a part each summer and each winter. If by chance one group needs the pasturage of another, the former will ask permission, and this will normally be granted. Special arrangements have always to be made, however; no group can simply move in on another's pasturage.

The axalaci of several "fifteens" in addition to chosen

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563 leaders from every five-tent group meet on problems of
622 importance such as taxes, Oirat-Chinese relations,
628 internal administration, new regulations and laws, etc.

5 This assembly of a tribe is called in Oirat: xurug.

792 Lamaseries function as marketing centers and these are
443 the only places where non-patrilineally-related people meet
each other in order to trade their products and where they
go for religious festivals.

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563 There are slight differences in herd ownership and
619 management between the various tribes of the Western
233 Mongols. (They call themselves the "Dürwön Oirat" (or
422 "four Oirat") or Ulan-Zalatan ("those who wear red
tassels on their hats).) The main tribes of Western
Mongols are the Torguts, the Dürbüts and the Ölbts plus the
Oirat proper.

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602 Some tribes merge the herds of related and non-related
609 individuals while others do not. The basis for different
types of economic activities is the "non-kinship-relationship."

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563 Some Western Mongolian tribes came in contact with
177 other peoples more than other tribes did, in the course of
history, with the result that customs, usage, and tradition
underwent slight changes. Nevertheless, the pattern of
184 authority, of inheritance, and the fact that the extended
family represents a basic functional unit for purposes of
taxation, exogamy, election, etc., are by and large the
same in all tribes.

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563 The Salars:

794 In the Chinese province of Kansu are found three classes
of Moslems. There are those who have descended from the
merchants on the old trade route from China through Persia
to Arabia; another group has evolved from the Uighur branch
of the Hun family; and finally there are the Salars. The Salars
are of pure Turkish origin and are among the latest arrivals
in China.

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197 To their new home the Salars brought with them the
N original Turkish language and to this day that is their spoken
197 language. The men have learned just a few words of Chinese
N and the women hardly any. This is one of the indications of a
563 lack of assimilation which is characteristic of the Moslems
794 in the west of China. Thus there is a general similarity among
177 the Moslems of Kansu and a dissimilarity between them and
184 Moslems further east. With the progression eastward assim-
ilation of Islam to the Chinese way of life increases to the
extent that finally the only difference is the abstinence from
eating pork.

This difference in the degree of assimilation can be attributed
to four factors: the Moslems in the east have been exposed to

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preclude their enjoying any great influence.

The Salars' pattern of social life follows the Islamic form. Patriarchy rules the extended family, whose members' main occupation is agricultural work. However, agriculture goes hand in hand with trade, which plays also a noticeable role. As a group, the Salars are economically unimportant since they form only a small Turkic tribe.

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The Sarigh Uighurs:

The Sarigh Uighurs, the so-called Yellow Uighurs, are a small tribe of Turkic origin which is becoming extinct. Although immediate neighbors of the Chinese, they never learned agriculture, and remained herdsmen. Nowadays the Sarigh Uighurs are mostly hired shepherds of Chinese cattle owners. Frequently one also finds them as laborers on Chinese farms. An occasional Sarigh Uighur family owns a few cows, sheep, and horses. The smallest and the only social unit, is the patriarchal family.

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The Sher Yögur:

The people belonging to this small Mongolian tribe, rapidly becoming extinct, are semi-nomadic herdsmen. The old Mongolian clan-system is still preserved. Clan exogamy exists and the migrational units are the single clans. The economic centers, however, are their Buddhist monasteries, for it is the monasteries who own the herds and not the individual tribesmen.

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The Monguors:

Ethnically consisting of Mongols, Turks, Tibetans, and Chinese, speaking an old Mongolian and Tibetanized dialect, the Monguors are the only Mongolian tribe of the Northwest that shifted successfully from nomadic pastoralism to farming. They learned farming and the use of their agricultural tools for raising barley, wheat, peas, potatoes, etc., from the Chinese. However, livestock still plays an important role as the second important economic resource. While sheep, cows, mules, and pigs are economically important, horses are bred only because to own horses is a mark of prestige.

The basic social and economic unit of the Monguors is the extended family which is patrilineally and patrilocally oriented. The grandfather and great-grandfather enjoy authority over all members of the family. Property is collectively owned.

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The families belong to a clan which is headed by a chieftain whose Chinese title is T'u-ssu, who is at the same time a Chinese official. Originally the clan chieftain was simply the head of a number of extended families, whose migrations he directed and whose highest duty was the military protection of the clan through organization and training of the men. Later

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of the average Chinese seems to be fatalistic, considering Providence or Heaven to determine his fortune in life. In general, the average Chinese is rather indifferent in religious matters, although he might be sensitive if someone looked askance on his belief in local spirits, demons, and gods, but this is merely a matter of tradition rather than religion.

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The Chinese is strongly individualistic and usually dislikes to be ordered around and governed; he ardently defends his own opinions. His inclination for social groupings is obvious. Wherever Chinese live, they soon form integrated communities and at times of distress or in critical situations they are ready to help each other collectively, a characteristic tendency found especially within the extended family, which as a rule feels itself responsible as a whole for debts, misdeeds, etc., of any member. The Chinese are reported to be basically anti-militaristic, although this may be more a traditional attitude of the literati than a sound fact, considering only the last fifty years of Chinese history. However, a Chinese proverb says, "From good iron do not make nails; from good men do not make soldiers." To toil his fields in peace, to make a living this way, and to raise his children, whom he deeply loves, and not to be interfered with by state and government, can be described as the average conception of the "good life." The average Chinese of the Northwest lives in simple mud or stone houses (in the Yellow River area, caves of the adjacent loess hills), stove, k'ang, and ancestor altar being almost the only furniture.

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Culture, art, and literature were primarily fostered by the richer merchants, land and water owners, and, of course, the officials and scholars. These groups represented, up to 1949, an economically powerful class who owned a considerable part of the land and the water rights. Chinese officials of the frontier provinces had a reputation for being extremely money-minded. The Chinese gentry, consisting of former officials and degree holders, who were in many cases at the same time holders of land or water rights, have been abolished as a class, while large parts of the academic strata, the intelligentsia, became more or less the Communist avantgarde of China, showing the same phenomenon which appeared in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, etc., before and during the Second World War, where the intelligentsia showed a deep inclination towards Communism.

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In regard to the nomadic minorities of the Northwest (Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Mongols and Tibetans) the dominant social motives are two fold, and can be subdivided into an economic and a religious one, equally strong. The whole economic life of the nomads is centered around their livestock. The nomad's life

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563 depends on his herds: they are his only resource, his only
233 wealth, and his only pride. When two nomads meet, whether
(521) they are Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Mongols, or Tibetans, the first
(554) subject that comes up is their cattle. Among nomads, social
(422) status is established by the possession of horses, camels,
and livestock in general, and only secondarily determined
by titles or descent. This is especially true for the Kirghiz,
Kazakhs and Tibetans, and to a lesser degree for the
Mongols, among whom aristocratic birth (real or imagined)
plays an important role.

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(342) The average nomad's life can be described as follows: he
(352) lives in a roomy felt tent, furnished with house altar, in the
(353) case of Buddhists, or with an artistically made book-stand
for the Quran in the case of Muslims, and some chests and
carpets. The whole family takes care of the livestock, and
periodically the migration unit moves during the summer time
from pasture to pasture, preserving the richest and most
protected grazing land for the winter time. The weather
(621) plays a fatal role in the welfare of the nomad's livestock, and
every so often a migration unit (the ail, the aul, the ayir,
the omoq, otoq, xotn, or uruq, the ulus or even the aimaq)
loses its livestock. In this case, those clans which still own
enough livestock divide their herds and lend part of them to
those who suffered the loss. Collective cooperation is exer-
cised in this respect by Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Mongols,
while the nomadic Tibetans, in a similar situation, have quite
a reputation for robbing neighboring tribes of their livestock.

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563 The nomadic way of life, the close contact with nature and
771 dependence on nature promotes animism, shamanism, and spir-
itualism, which goes hand in hand with the prevailing religions
of Islam (in the case of the Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Salars, and
some Tibetan clans) and Buddhism (in the case of the Mongols,
Tibetans, and Sarigh-Uighurs). As a general rule, the nomadic
Kirghiz and Kazakh are not very fanatic or ardent Muslims, and
neither are the Mongols very pious Buddhists, but still, both
feel strongly about their religious although they are rather lax
in their observance. No matter how poor a Buddhist nomad
(792) is, he voluntarily supports and feeds wandering lamas,
(794) invites several on major occasions (birth, death, and marriage
if the bride's father can afford it), pays them, and finally is
accustomed to the old tradition of giving a small percentage of
his livestock every year to Buddhist monasteries. All
nomads are very superstitious, and the relationship between
cause and effect is often misinterpreted, e.g., in the case
of disease or weather. It is safe to say that the dominant
motives of the nomads are economic in the first place and
religious in the second place.

V. Individualistic and Collectivistic Beliefs and Traditions

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The nomadic society of the Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Mongols shows collectivistic trends insofar as the pastures are always owned collectively and the livestock can be taken care of and protected only cooperatively. In periods of war and uprisings, the livestock had to be protected militarily, which was one reason why the military organization of the nomads, introduced by Chingis Khan, survived up to the twentieth century. Here we can say that the nomadic Kirghiz and Kazakh still shows a tremendous martial spirit, especially the Kazakhs who fought the Communists in 1949 and 1950 in a heroic way in spite of the fact that they were outnumbered from the very beginning.

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As a matter of fact, the Mongols show much less martial spirit than neighboring Kirghiz, Kazakh and especially Tibetans, who constantly rise up here and there, becoming a major nuisance for Peking, although they are hopelessly outnumbered by Chinese Communist Troops. Many explorers agree independently that the Mongols, once intrepid, dauntless, unafraid, frightful and terrifying warriors, make now the impression of being inefficient soldiers, timid, downhearted, and discouraged (so Rockhill, Howorth, Tafel, Vladimirtsov, Hedin, Futterer, and Filchner). Russian scholars, above all B. Vladimirtsov in his *Le Regime Social Des Mongols*, *Le feodalisme Nomade*, Paris 1948, blame Buddhism for the disappearance of the martial spirit and courage of the Mongols. This opinion is, however, contradicted by the fact that Tibetans, who have been influenced by Buddhism some centuries longer than the Mongols, are well-known as tough and cunning fighters and apparently fearless and daring insurgents.

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Almost every Tibetan family has at least one son in a monastery. They faithfully pay their tributes to these monasteries where their sons live as novices or monks. The monasteries are the only cultural centers of the nomads. Kumbum might be named as a magnificent example in regard to external architectural beauty as well as internal wealth in respect to its library, printing house, and the spiritual value of its schools and its Lamaistic academies.

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(361)
There are many reasons to believe that the Communist regime is determined to abolish nomadism and to make the nomads sedentary or at least semi-sedentary. The first step was the erection of permanent winter sites. The attitude of the nomads toward the regime seems to be ambivalent. The erection of veterinary stations for the livestock and the extension of additional irrigated pastures certainly are measures approved by the nomads but on the other hand the threatening

1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China AF13 Sinkiang All

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deprivation of livestock and the progressing industrialization are certain to be the source of increasing discontent among the nomads.

In summing up, the nomads are extremely freedom-conscious. Freedom of the individual is expressed by the everlasting dream of every nomad which finds its expression in the conception of the free rider who recognizes nothing but "the eternal power of the eternal heaven" (Mongolian saying), and who possesses nothing but his felt tent, his highly esteemed and valued horses and his herds. But, no doubt, the Communists will succeed as they did in Soviet Russia in destroying the picture of the independent rider of the steppes of Central Asia, the cradle of so many different peoples and magnificent cultures.

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(668)
Nomads combine harmoniously individualistic and collectivistic trends of their pattern of life. Communistic collectivization can be imposed upon them by force, of course, but they will hardly accept it in their minds.

563 181 153 VI. Approach to Individual and National Problems

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The nomads of the Northwest work hard for their existence. It is easily understood that they need their whole energy for maintaining such a life, which is a constant struggle against the hardships of land, weather and against the centuries-old uncertain political environment. Under such circumstances the nomads developed very realistic minds. A realistic mind is implicitly logical in regard to political or daily matters of life, although the realization of the unpredictable inclemencies or favors of surrounding Nature gave rise to an illogical or, in terms of Jung's depth philosophy, a trans-logical conception of the relationship between man and Nature, whose favorable or unfavorable phenomena were brought into connection with their "good and bad" deeds, whereby "good and bad" do not have the same connotation as they do in our society: polygamy in the case of the Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Eastern Turks, polyandry in the case of the Tibetans, or murder of a personal dependent in the case of Kazakhs, for example, are never considered as "bad" deeds, but killing a louse, in the case of a Mongol, or killing of a yak calf (even if it is sick or hurt) in the case of Tibetans, are considered "bad" deeds.

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The nomadic Muslims (Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Salars and some Islamized Tibetan clans) as well as the sedentary Muslims (New-Uighurs, Uzbeks, Tatars, Tajiks, Chinese Muslims or Dungans) have on account of their religion a rather doctrinal

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a proponent of the theory of climatic alternations, called the phenomenon "the pulse of Asia."

The most important of the multiple influences is believed to be that of the economic effects of climatic changes. When the climate is warm and moist, the land of the nomads is fertile enough to support the nomads and their herds, but when the climate becomes drier and colder, the rivers and lakes shrink and the pasturage is reduced. This cuts down the food supply and forces the nomads to rampage into the land of their neighbors. Speaking of the thirteenth century, Arnold Toynbee declared that the "paroxysm of aridity coincided in date with the demoniac eruption of the Mongols, and it will be seen that the physiographical recoil towards humidity likewise corresponds in date with the rapid ebb of the Mongols." (A Study of History, vol. III, p. 439).

Although the outbursts and recessions of the nomads were periodic, the rigid periodization was too mechanical and many scholars have discredited climate as the sole factor. Huntington suggests that four factors may have impelled the huge migration of the nomadic peoples, namely: climate, the inherent quality of the people especially as manifested by the leaders, the pull exerted by the wealth and the opportunities of the agricultural lands, and the push exerted by over-population. (Mainsprings of Civilization, p. 568).

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A period of peace and prosperity would allow the population of the nomads to increase. However, in the desolate steppes, food was dependent upon flocks of sheep and herds of cattle and horses, and the people, unlike their sedentary neighbors, did not have the tradition nor the facilities for food storage. Any sudden change in climate which caused a reduction of pasturage and water supply would create a "time of troubles" and compel the nomadic people to migrate in search of food and pasturage.

When the nomads were experiencing a "time of troubles," the lush riches and the military weakness of the settled peoples would tempt border tribes to encroach upon the agrarian regions. Distress and discontent at home and the lure of wealth abroad furnish the push and the pull of Toynbee's theories. When the leavening of bold leadership and ideas were added, the nomads often were induced to burst out from the steppes of Asia and to set the world in commotion.

Other scholars entirely discount the influence of climate and seek the explanation for the advance and withdrawal of the nomads in social and political conditions. Owen Lattimore, who has given much thought to this question, (cf. Inner Asian Frontiers, passim), lists a number of reasons other than climate, for the eruption of the nomads. There were, for example, technological factors like the invention of the powerful compound bow and the technique of mounted archery which gave the nomads an edge over their enemies.

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The Chinese had to adopt the nomad bow and the technique of mounted archery before they could meet the nomads on equal terms.

Another factor, according to Lattimore, was the pastoral economy of the nomads which led to migration. Horses and cattle cannot graze on fields that have been cropped by sheep and goats.

Therefore, the nomads whose livelihood depended upon their herds and flocks, must continually seek new pastures. The claims to pasturelands and the right of movement led to wars. The continuous wars stimulated the rise of leaders, hard-headed men who survived the hurly-burly of warfare and politics of the steppes and deserts. Finally, a supreme leader emerged who would then weld the various groups into a grand confederation strong enough to encroach upon the neighboring regions for land, for the profits of trade, and for revenue and tribute from the conquered peoples.

According to Lattimore, the nomads who invaded the marginal zone between the steppes and the settled lands, were not pure nomads but were semi-settled. Their wars of conquest were not only for pastures for their herds and flocks but for land, for the riches of the cities, and for the proceeds of commerce. Moreover, the cycles of their invasion and retreat began only a few centuries before the Christian era when they split from the settled peoples on China's northwestern frontier and when they acquired the technology of nomadic warfare. The true nomads on the steppes evolved from the mixed nomads, not vice versa.

The migrations which led to conquest over a wide area, such as those carried out by the Huns, the Turks and the Mongols, normally did not begin with the true nomads but with the mixed nomads, and were caused by (1) a group breaking away from the mixed nomads in order to become true nomads; or (2) a group breaking away from the true nomads in order to revert back to mixed nomadism. The Huns, Turks, and Mongols had fixed bases of operation and their conquests were for land.

Under these circumstances, according to Lattimore, the cycles of nomadic expansion and withdrawal each went through the following process:

1. The maintenance of large armies of mounted warriors to conquer land for the profit of trade and revenue from subject peoples;
2. A dichotomy of nomad society. The nomadic warriors who went forth to conquer and who were left to garrison conquered territories had control of the sources of wealth but declined militarily. The warriors who stayed in the steppes as the military reserve continued to be warlike but gradually became impoverished;
3. A split within the nomad state between those in the conquered areas and those in the steppes, leading to decline and withdrawal.

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6. Summary

In summary, the workings of the historical process represented

563 Known clan names of the Middle Horde are the following: Chakchat,
619 Chardzhid, Turtul, Karaul, Karakisak, Kandzhagali, Achai, Tarakli,
614 Kulchan-Argin, Kundelen, Usun, Tanabuga, Karabalik-Kipchak.

3. Economy

563 The Kazakhs are still nomads. The rear camels, horses,
• 233 sheep and goats. In contrast to the Eastern Turks who live in
433 brick and mud houses, they live in felt tents. The Kazakhs are
[342] famous horse and camel breeders. Sheep play the most important
role as sources of wool and meat. Like the Kirghiz and the Mongols,
the Kazakhs have carefully explored, selected and defended summer
pastures and protected valleys for the winter time.

563 The Kazakhs are very proud and independent. They dislike
181 any political supervision and are known to have avoided tax collec-
tors by crossing the borders to Mongolia of Soviet Russia.

4. Literature

563 The Kazakhs have a huge folklore which is being handed down
538 from generation to generation. They still use the Arabic script,
[173] but only a small percentage of noblemen and clergy are literate.
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5. Religion

563 The Kazakhs are Moslems, belonging to the Sunna sect, but
771 they are in no way passionate and ardent believers like, for instance,
the Turks of Persia. Their nomadic life obviously does not permit
strict observance of the Islamic regulations.

D. The Kirghiz

1. History

101 Prior to the Communist Revolution the Kirghiz were called
175 Kara-Kirghiz or Burut. When the Kirghiz were driven out of Mon-
563 golia by the Kara Khitai (shortly before 924 A.D.), some moved
southwest into the areas where they now live.

563 The Kirghiz are subdivided into two wings: Ong-the right one,
619 and Sol-the left one. Like the Kazakhs, the Kirghiz have a very
614 well preserved clan system. They are believed to represent the
[144] oldest Turkish tribe. As far as their physical characteristics are
concerned, what has been said about the Kazakhs is also true for
the Kirghiz; i.e., the Kirghiz also had mixed with Mongol clans
at a very early period.

2. Their regulation

[147] The Kirghiz have a reputation for being extremely resistant
[181] to rigorous climate, hunger and diseases. They are well known
[212] for their wit and sense of humor. Although most are illiterate,
[538] their vivid folklore is handed down in every single tent and many
Kirghiz tribesmen are able to quote thousands of rhymes from
their epic songs.

3. Economy

563 Their weather-beatend faces show that they live in the moun-
361 tains. They breed horses, camels, sheep, goats and yaks. When
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563 summer comes, they take their cattle way up on the pastures of
361 the mountains. The winter forces them to descend and to spend
233 some months in the more protected valleys.

4. Religion

563 The Kirghiz are Moslems of the Sunna Sect. Their script is
771 Arabic and is known only by noblemen or clergy. The only Moslem
212 rule which is strictly observed is that of abstaining from eating
262 pork.

5. Changes under Chinese Communist rule

563 In order to fight illiteracy the new Chinese Communist Govern-
771 ment erected schools for the Turks of Sinkiang in almost all villages,
871 towns and cities. The Chinese claim also that the process of making
668 them sedentary has brought remarkable progress to the Kirghiz.
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E. The Uzbeks

563 1. Physical characteristics

369 Only a few thousand Uzbeks live in Sinkiang, and they live ex-
clusively in the cities. Outwardly they are utterly different from
142 the Kirghiz and the Kazakhs, since they represent the alpine,
141 europide and Iranian type of Turk. They show long, narrow faces,
heavy hair growth, brown, sometimes blue, eyes, no Mongolian
fold, sharp prominent noses, white skin, body height 1700 to
1840 mm. Mongoloid features rarely can be found. In most cases
Uzbek are the same physical type as the peasants of the European
Alps.

2. Economic activities

463 The Uzbeks live as merchants, inn-owners, and craftsmen in
369 Sinkiang cities. They are more educated than any other Turkish
871 tribe of Central Asia, since they have absorbed a great deal of
191 Persian culture. Many Uzbeks speak Persian as a second language,
and Chinese as a third (like the Eastern Turks), while Kirghiz and
Kazakhs know only their mother tongue.

3. Religion

771 The Uzbeks are Moslems of the Sunna sect. Kirghiz and Kazakhs
call the Uzbeks Sart, which simply means Turks who broke away
from their nomadic way of life and became merchants.

4. Origin and linguistic affiliation

101 The Uzbeks, living in Sinkiang came from Soviet Uzbekistan.
They received their name from Uzbek, a fourteenth century Khan
of the Golden Horde.

197 The Uzbek language can be considered as the direct descendant
of the Chagatai written language. Even today the difference between
written Uzbek and the Chagatai language is very small.

F. The Salars

31 1. Physical characteristics

The Salars live in Hsun-hua-t'ing on the right bank of the

563 and their thin beards were black. They were of average height
[142] and no corpulent people were observed.

2. Economic activities

• [233] The Sarigh-Uighurs are breeding horses, cows and sheep. Their
[556] economic position seems to be very poor. Even the richest man owns
[291] only a few horses and cows. They live in homesteads. Their clothing
is Chinese in style.

H. The Tatars

1. Economic activities

Only a few thousand Tatars live in Sinkiang. They represent
[167] a very distinctive Mongoloid type of Turk. Most of the Sinkiang
Tatars had fled from the former Kazan Khanate in the Volga
region after the Communist Revolution. Some, however, have
lived in Sinkiang since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
[463] Despite their small numbers the Tatars have had remarkable in-
[441] fluence as merchants and traders due to their high education.
[871] For a long time they have been the middlemen between the Russian
merchants and the Turkic tribes.

2. Religion and literature

[771] The Tatars are either Moslems or Christians. Their litera-
[538] ture is very well-developed and illiteracy is practically unknown.
[212] In Sinkiang they still use the Arabic script.

III. The Mongols of the Northwest

A. The Mongols of Sinkiang

1. General characteristics

The Mongolian tribes of Sinkiang are all Oirats or Western
[167] Mongols. Only the Chahar Mongols, who were transferred from
Inner Mongolia by the Manchus, are Eastern Mongols. A small
group, the so-called Uriangkhai, are considered to be Mongols,
but in reality they are Turks who have adopted Mongolian as their
new language.

a. tribes

[619] The Western Mongols (Oirats or Olöts) of Sinkiang consist of
[197] two tribes: the Koshuts and the Torguts. They all speak a West-
ern Mongolian dialect, very similar to Kalmuck, formerly spoken
in the Kalmuck Socialist Republic.

b. religion and economy

[771] All Western Mongols are faithful Buddhists. They are said to
[233] be very uniform in their customs and habits. They are all pastoral
[342] nomads and breed horses, camels, sheep and yaks. They still live
[614] in collapsible tents. The clan system is well preserved.

2. Physical characteristics

563 Employing Eickstedt's terminology, the Western Mongols repre-
141 sent the Mongoloid race, and are one of its purest examples: the
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SOCIAL STRUCTURE

I. The Nomads

563 A. The Nomadic Turks (Kazakh, Kirghiz and Uzbek)
556 The distinguishing feature of the social structure of the nomadic
611 Turks of the Northwest is that social status is acquired by wealth
428 (sheep, cows, camels and horses) or by descent. Descent among
the nomadic Turks is always patrilineal, and a modified form of
ultimogeniture is found. As the sons of each family marry, each
[425] one receives an equal share of the family's wealth. This includes
a winter pasture. Only the youngest son inherits the father's
property (tents, precious furniture, etc.).

621 The smallest social unit is the family; a number of related
563 families constitute an aul which is at the same time the migration
[592] unit in regard to pastoral nomadism.

[233] Unrestricted authority is held by the patriarch of the family.
[622] The patriarch of the most influential family (measured in terms
of wealth and family connections) becomes the chieftain of an aul.
621 A certain number of auls constitute the great aul. The latter
563 possesses a common property brand which is called tamga (the
614 tamga marks are to be found mostly on the left side of animals,
422 on tents and on gravestones. The tamgas are believed to be of
totemistic origin and therefore thought to be a very old institution.
Their purpose, obviously, is to distinguish and identify herds and
other property.

614 The great aul (which might also be called a sub-clan) is led
563 by a chieftain whose title is bāk, beg, biy, bey, or pex, depending
upon the Turkic dialect concerned. The chieftain of such a great
aul functions as a leader and as a judge whose duty it is to medi-
ate and to appease in disputes between single persons, families
and auls. Several great auls constitute a clan, which is also led
by one of the bāks of the great auls. Several clans together form
614 a tribe which is led by a khan or sultan and finally two or three
619 tribes constitute a horde which in turn form the nation; e.g., the
563 Kazakh have four hordes, the Kirghiz two, etc. Sometimes it is
621 difficult to decide what constitutes a great aul or sub-clan and
614 what is actually a clan. An extended family may have the function
596 of an aul; a great clan may have the function of a clan; while a
563 declined clan only has the function of an aul.

[829] A Kazakh Turk could define his position within his own people
by stating that he belongs a) to the Turkic race b) to the Kazakh
nation c) to the Middle horde d) to the Kipchak tribe e) to the
Toru Aibgyr clan f) to the Shashli sub-clan (great aul) g) to the
Boshai branch (aul) and h) to the Janay sub-branch (extended fam-
ily). For the Kirghiz and Kazakhs, a clan can be defined as a
614 social group which, by force of either real or putative consanguinity,
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C. The Kirghiz

563 1. The people

[791] Taking Tien-shan as a whole, the Kirghiz form the leading
element of the population. They are Mohammedans of the Suni
[642] order, but they are not strict followers of their religion. Their
[622] system of government is patriarchal, control of the different
sections being vested in tribal elders who enjoy almost unlimited
authority. The elders (Manap) are chosen by the people, and
regarded with honor and respect.

• [233] The people are nomads whose main occupation is cattle rais-
[241] ing. Only a small proportion of the population engages in farm-
ing.

563 2. Patterns of living

342 a. Dwelling

[184] The Kirghiz do not live in houses. The poor live in shelters
made of branches under trees or against overhanging rocks. The
rich live in tents, smaller and less ornate than the Mongolian
yurt but more solid with thick layers of felt. A light tent is
called an aq-ai. It stands a gale very well, as the shape is such
that a high wind presses the structure even more firmly to the
ground. To make it more stable, a large stone is placed in the
tent and the woodwork of the roof is anchored to it by a rope.

The shape and structure of an aq-ai are similar to those of
[354] the Mongolian yurt, but the interior arrangement differs. A fire
always burns cheerily in the middle and a cauldron of mash
[353] simmers upon it. At the far end is the kitchen, which is screen-
[251] ed by gaily colored mats of reeds tightly wound with dyed wool.
Here the housewife stores her milk, cream and curds in vast
[231] wooden bowls. When the weather is wet, a row of young lambs
occupies one corner of the tent. They are tethered closely to a
[353] rope pegged down along the walls. Saddlebags, sieves, hats,
wool, coats, skins and so forth are hung along the tent walls.
Piles of rolled-up felts and rugs occupy about a quarter of the
circumference of the tent. The wealth of the owner may be
guessed from the size of the piles.

563 The interior decoration in the tent of a wealthy Kirghiz is
342 often artistic. The walls are hung with embroideries made by
352 the women, and the ground is covered with carpets. There are
353 also pillows covered with multi-colored chintz of Chinese or
Russian manufacture. Furniture is not generally used. There is
[415] an occasional table, a few copper pots and pans, and some brass
jugs used for boiling water and making tea.

563 b. Food

262 Staple foods for the Kirghiz are barley, bread, milk and its
252 products, such as sour cream and qurut, a kind of cheese. In
most tents there are cauldrons of brewing mash, a mixture of
flour and milk. Qurut is made by drying sour cream in goatskin.

/Western Mongols or Torguts/

As
563 their forefathers had much contact with the Russians and the
177 Chinese, they are more or less influenced by the culture and
civilization of both. The Chinese influence appears to be the
strongest.

563 Largely nomads, the West Mongols live a life similar to that
• 233 of their nomad brothers of Inner Mongolia. Only as a last resort
[171] do they abandon tent life and take up agriculture.

[241] The nobles who live in cities dwell in houses that are a com-
563 bination of Tibetan and Occidental architectural style, flat-
565 roofed, whitewashed, and with walled-in courtyards. Like the
369 Chinese, they sleep on k'angs. One often finds Russian furniture
342 in the house, Chinese embroideries decorating the walls, and
177 red silk draperies with Mongolian mottoes.

[352] The ordinary people wear long gowns of Chinese cut, but the
[353] customary Mongolian sash and equipment (see clothing section
563 of IMAR Handbook). A young man wears a long gown with a
291 sleeveless velvet waistcoat on top. Formerly, the officials
177 wore silk robes of Chinese cut, and the decorative cap of Im-
perial times with a peacock feather to signify the position of
chieftainship. Nowadays they wear a Chinese style long gown
with a sleeved jacket (ma-kua).

563 Food of the West Mongols is similar to that of other nomadic
322 peoples, but when the rich entertain, the cuisine is a combina-
556 tion of Mongolian, Chinese and Russian styles.
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000 oases. A trade road, looping around the desert, links the oases
133 like beads on a string, forming a U with the open end toward the
491 east.

131 Dsungaria is in northern Sinkiang, between the Tianshan and
the Altai mountains which mark the frontier between Sinkiang and
132 Western Mongolia. Precipitation here is slightly higher, and
137 steppe vegetation makes pastoralism possible. Northern Dsungaria
233 was the avenue of migration followed by the Mongols in their west-
ward conquests.
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2. Pastoral nomadism

233 In 1943, there were 11,720,000 sheep and goats in Sinkiang,
1,550,000 cattle, 870,000 horses, and 90,000 camels, totalling
14,230,000. In 1947 the province reported 12,266,000 sheep and
goats, 1,659,000 cattle, 1,027,000 horses, and 85,000 camels,
a total of 15,037,000. The total has remained somewhat constant
over a period of time, probably due to the fact that pasture land
is poor and care of the herds inadequate. Most of the livestock
are in Dsungaria, pastured in the steppe land by nomad Kazakhs
or Mongols. There are many variations to the techniques of
herding animals since cattle, horses, and camels each prosper
best on different kinds of pasture. The problem is to devise the
best combinations of animals to be maintained and to select the
appropriate pasture, decide how long to remain on a pasture,
when to move, and how.

3. Oasis agriculture

241 There are two kinds of oases in Sinkiang: those in the south,
312 which are sharply isolated from each other by desert stretches
and the oases of the north, which have fringes of land in which
rainfall farming prevails. When irrigation was introduced, it
seems to have been practiced first on the lower courses of the
rivers, where the soil was soft and the engineering problems
required only the digging of simple ditches from the banks of the
streams. In the course of time, as knowledge of engineering
developed, the tendency was for the oasis to move upstream
toward the boulder slopes at the edge of the foothills, but not back
into the gorges where the problems were far too great.

Oasis engineering is extremely simple. The basic pattern is
a main canal from the river, branching into smaller canals which
branch in turn into ditches which deliver water to the fields, all
arranged so that water flows by gravity from level to level, with-
out the pumping or bailing devices which are widely used in China
and in Soviet Turkestan to lift water from lower to higher levels.

[133] In volume of discharge, the rivers of the Tarim system are
far behind the two great rivers of Soviet Inner Asia, the Syr Darya
and the Amu Darya. The total discharge of all streams in Sin-
kiang is about 3400 cubic meters per second, of which about
seventy per cent is in the Tarim Basin. In irrigation engineering

THROUGH FLY-LAND IN A TARANTASS 259

vegetables and fruit, especially grapes and apples, find 241
a ready market in the capital. The grapes were the
largest we had ever seen, and we carried in the cart an
abundant supply which more than made up for the
lightening of our load by the bread we had consumed !
We were now only a few miles from the Manas River, 133
which is the most important stream in this part of 41
Turkestan. Its source is in the Celestial Mountains,
but it finally loses itself in the sand. A little earlier in
the season, when the snows were melting, the Manas
River is often impassable, and a Chinese lady friend
had a few weeks earlier been upset into the water and
nearly lost her life. We were now in the last days of
August, and it was already cold in the heights of the
Tian Shan, therefore we had no cause to fear the sudden
treacherous rise of the water which comes from the
melting snow, and we crossed without difficulty.

Our next stopping-place was Ulan-Usun—' Blue 485
Water '—where we had the advantage of occupying the 353
inn room which had been papered and swept for the
use of the Governor's son, who had preceded us on his
way to Zaisan. Fresh red paper with eulogistic phrases
decorated the door frame ; clean matting covered the
kang, and the court had been generally tidied up in
honour of such an important guest. The flies, however, [36]
still remained.

The country here was splendid grazing ground, 233
covered with tall ' chi-chi ' grass. The Mongolian 221
nomads pitch their tents on this plain during the winter
months, when the cold drives them down from the
higher pastures.

Our driver, though a surly cross-grained fellow, was 000
beginning to thaw under our constant friendly advances.
His knowledge of Chinese was very poor, but the
present of a bunch of grapes or a piece of new bread,

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133 of a glacier of the Kungur group according to Sir Aurel Stein's map. This upper valley was well tenanted by Kirghiz at whose yorts we stopped that night just below the snow line.

The snow which fell that night obliterated all signs of the track, but in 2½ hours our guide took us unerringly to the top of the pass which he called Yambulak—not Tur Bulung. A glacier on the east side of Muztagh Ata is also called Yambulak. I guessed the height to be about 16,000 feet, and though the track is boulder-strewn, lightly laden ponies could cross the pass if clear of snow. From here we dropped about a thousand feet before climbing again to the Yangi Dawan which overlooks the Chichiklik maidan from the north. This great grassy plain lying at a height of 15,000 feet, in summer thick with grazing yaks, was now bare of life. It was a windy cold evening, so that we were lucky to find shelter in the squalid yort of a family who were trying to live like Kirghiz without the essential livestock. Their sole livestock were five sheep and they existed precariously on the bounty of stray travellers like ourselves. From here we reached Tashkurghan next day by the usual route down the horrible, bone-strewn Dershat defile.

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487 Between Tashkurghan and Gilgit the seeker after variety is hard put to it. As a variation to the Mintaka Pass route, that over the Kilik Pass, by reason of nearness and similarity, hardly qualifies, while the only other alternative seemed to be a very generous sweep to the east by the Oprang Valley and back into the Hunza Valley by the Shingshal route. But if in order to avoid the usual I must indulge in wide generous sweeps, there was a more interesting one to be made to the west over the Wakhjir Pass and back into India by either the Irshad or Khora Bhort Pass and so down the Karumbar Valley to Gilgit. It was unfortunately true that this route entailed crossing a frontier as well as a pass—and frontiers are usually the more difficult—but I should not have to be on the wrong side of it more than two days before nipping smartly back to the right side.

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167 From Mintaka Karaul, where there is the last Chinese post, we followed the main valley westwards, leaving the Mintaka and Kilik Passes on our left. It is a fine open valley, comparatively rich in grass but bare of life—deserted, one supposes, on account of its proximity to the Russian frontier. We crossed the Wakhjir (16,150 feet) on September 28th accompanied by some Kirghiz whom we had met a few miles below the pass. They had come there only the day before and were one of some thirty families who, we were told, were migrating to Chinese territory from the Murghab Valley east of the Chakmaktin lake on account of incursions and harryings by Kirghiz from the Russian side. We camped at a yort on the bank of the river less than two miles below the ice cave at the snout of the unnamed glacier which is, I think, accepted now as the true source of the Oxus.

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372 Between here and Bozai Gumbaz there were only a group of yorts on the south side of the river and a small homestead on the north bank where an attempt was being made to grow barley. "Gumbaz"—the conical mud cupola on a square base built in memory of some holy man—were far more numerous than people. There is peat on the flats on either bank of the river and many stacks of it drying were perhaps evidence of a